



Department of Justice

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TWO MEN SENTENCED FOR FEDERAL HATE CRIMES IN UTAH

WASHINGTON – Shaun A. Walker of Mill Point, W.Va., and Eric Egbert of Salt Lake City, Utah, were sentenced yesterday in federal court in Salt Lake City for their convictions on federal hate crime charges. Walker was sentenced to 87 months imprisonment, and Egbert was sentenced to 42 months imprisonment. After release from prison, each defendant will be on federal supervised release for three years. Walker is a former leader of the National Alliance, a West Virginia-based national white-separatist group; Egbert was also a member of the group.

In April, a federal jury convicted Walker and Egbert and a third defendant, Travis Massey, of the racially motivated beating of James Ballesteros, a Mexican-American, on New Year's Eve 2002. The evidence at trial established that shortly before midnight, Walker, Massey and Egbert were in the O'Shucks Bar in downtown Salt Lake City and shouted racial epithets at several patrons and Ballesteros, who was the bar's manager. As Ballesteros attempted to escort them from the bar, the defendants pulled Ballesteros outside and beat him to the ground by brutally punching and kicking him.

In addition to the assault on Ballesteros, the jury also convicted Walker, Egbert and Massey of conspiring to violate the federally protected right of Ballesteros and others to enjoy a place of public accommodation free from violence based on their race. The conspiracy charge included an allegation that Massey participated in a similar assault against an unidentified Native-American man outside the Port O'Call Bar in Salt Lake City in March 2003.

"Racial violence is offensive to our nation's fundamental values," said Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "The Justice Department is committed to vigorously prosecuting the federal laws prohibiting violent acts motivated by hate."

"The United States Attorney's Office in Utah, with the support of the FBI and local law enforcement agencies, has been unwavering in its commitment to investigate and aggressively prosecute violations of civil rights cases," U.S. Attorney

Brett L. Tolman said. "People are free to express whatever ideas they choose, but they are not free to act on these ideas in ways that harm others or intimidate them in the free exercise of basic rights."

Prosecuting the perpetrators of bias-motivated crimes is a top priority of the Justice Department. Since 2001, the Civil Rights Division has charged 165 defendants in 105 cases of bias-motivated crimes.

The case was investigated by the Salt Lake City Police Department and the Salt Lake City Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Carlos Esqueda and Trial Attorney Stephen Curran of the Civil Rights Division.

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